

Wharton Motorized Recreation Plan
Non-Motorized Recreation Group Meeting
October 19, 2015

Ideas/Thoughts/Questions/Concerns raised during meeting

- Public loss of trust with DEP because plan was rolled out without public participation
- 2015 plan created with environmental group input, but not public or business input.
- Questions on what determined and how we closed access, specifically about closing off Jemima Mount. Some agreed that the more sensitive environmental/cultural areas may need to be closed at times.
- How do we use cameras? – make sure photos of license plates can be taken.
- Dirt bikes are all over the place, why are they encouraged?
- Equestrians do not want their own trails.
- Consider issuing a permit to enter the park's interior roads.
- All people who kayak – need improved turn around points and improved road maintenance. Mile marking the rivers has really been helpful.
- Maybe do a classification of roads – with some roads open only for 2-wheel motorized recreation, etc.

Access issues:

- Barriers at Apple Pie Hill and campsites, why not do it at Jemima Mount?
- Organized group use of the forest – caravanning through the woods is an issue. In an organized event like enduros they come back afterwards – how do we control this?
- Batona Trail maintenance by volunteer group – they want to continue access. Can a special use permit be issued to allow access to do work?
- Roads that may not be open to motorized use – would still like to maintain equestrian use and to keep them accessible for search and rescue.
- Just do seasonal access – whether for hunting or other activities.
- Need to keep some access to historical areas and kayaking activities.

Maintenance:

- More signs and maintenance and enforcement.
- Do more maintenance and equipment “share” programs – such as working with DOT or local towns and sharing the use of graders.

Law enforcement/laws:

- What tickets/summons can be issued?
- Can we increase fines – develop minimum and maximum fines.
- If someone is found doing illegal activities, could it be a matter of issuing the maximum fines and that is the “policy.”
- Make existing regulations on the books stronger for all DEP law enforcement
- More surveillance cameras installed through the forest.
- Inform judges of what our natural and cultural resources impacts are by illegal use.
- Direct fines collected to go back to repair the damage that was caused by illegal use.

Education:

- Improve our State Parks message that people should stay on the roads.
- Go to local schools – grade schools, it's our water, trees, clean air to keep and protect. Bring children into the woods and do field activities that demonstrate the forest "gives life."
- Some form of literature on what is expected of you when visiting the forest – pass around along with a map.
- Changing the "culture" – peer pressure – school system.